

## **Former Federal Corrections Officer Sentenced for Lying to Federal Authorities**

A former corrections officer with the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) Federal Correctional Institution in Petersburg, Virginia (FCI-Petersburg), was sentenced Tuesday to 54 months in prison for willfully making false statements to federal agents during a federal criminal civil rights investigation, announced the Department of Justice.

On Feb. 12, 2020, a federal jury convicted Chikosi Legins, 41, of willfully making materially false statements to federal investigators during their investigation of allegations that Legins had sexually assaulted a prisoner, B.L., on two occasions. Specifically, the jury found that Legins falsely denied that he had engaged in a sexual act with any inmate at any time at FCI-Petersburg, and that Legins lied about what he was doing with B.L. in an unattended office in the prison at the time B.L. said that Legins had assaulted him. The jury acquitted Legins of one count of depriving B.L. of his civil rights, one count of aggravated sexual assault, and two counts of sexual abuse of a ward.

“The Department of Justice will ensure that those who willfully mislead officers to prevent justice for victims of civil rights violations are prosecuted,” said Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division.

“Legins abused the power and authority of his office to mislead law enforcement,” said G. Zachary Terwilliger, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. “When confronted by federal agents about alleged abuses, he lied - repeatedly and emphatically. His abuse and obstruction were a complete rejection of his law enforcement oath, and this prosecution and today’s sentence demonstrate our commitment to protecting all members of our society.”

“Legins lied to investigators in an attempt to cover up the truth. Today, justice is served. He will rightly serve time for his willful attempt to impede a civil rights investigation,” said Russell W. Cunningham, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General Washington Field Office.

The jury heard evidence that, on one occasion, Legins took B.L. into an unmonitored, unstaffed office area of the prison after staff in the office had left for the day. Legins told federal investigators that he and B.L. were engaged in “conversation” while Legins tried to use a computer and printer in the office, but a BOP computer expert testified that computer records showed that no one had attempted to use the computer in question at that time. Evidence presented at trial included the testimony of a DNA expert, who testified that DNA matching Legins had been recovered from the victim and from the victim’s clothing.

This case was investigated by the Department of Justice’s Office of the Inspector General and FBI’s Richmond Division, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas A. Garnett and Trial Attorney Kathryn E. Gilbert of the Civil Rights Division.